

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----069615 171751Z /41
P 171640Z AUG 77
FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9493

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 DUBLIN 1977

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EXDIS

FOR COUNSELOR NIMETZ AND DEP ASST SECRETARY VINE FROM
AMBASSADOR SHANNON

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: US, UK, EI
SUBJECT: PROPOSED STATEMENT ON NORTHERN IRELAND

1. THE FOLLOWING IS SUGGESTED BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR USE AT
PRESS BRIEFINGS BY PRESIDENT CARTER IN THE EVENT HE ISSUES THE
PROPOSED STATEMENT ON NORTHERN IRELAND AND ALSO FOR USE BY
THE DEPARTMENT:

2. THE IRA AND ITS SYMPATHIZERS IN IRELAND AND IN THE UNITED
STATES TRY TO MAKE THE SITUATION IN THE NORTH INTO A HUMAN
RIGHTS ISSUE. THE PRESIDENT COULD POINT OUT THAT,
PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS DEMONSTRATION
IN 1968, THERE WERE SOME DEPRIVATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THE
CATHOLIC MINORITY WAS DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IN PRIVATE
EMPLOYMENT AND IN THE ALLOCATION OF PUBLIC HOUSING. IN
RECRUITING AND PROMOTING EMPLOYEES, THE POLICE FORCE AND
THE UPPER LEVELS OF THE CIVIL SERVICE ALSO DISCRIMINATED
AGAINST THE MINORITY. MOREOVER, THE CITY OF DERRY, WHICH
HAS A CATHOLIC MAJORITY, WAS POLITICALLY GERRYMANDERED
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IN SUCH A WAY AS TO PRODUCE PROTESTANT CONTROL OF THE LOCAL
GOVERNMENT. CONTRARY TO NORMAL PRACTICE IN THE REST OF
THE UNITED KINGDOM, THIS PATTERN OF DISCRIMINATION WAS ALLOWED
TO EXIST IN NORTHERN IRELAND BECAUSE THE PROVINCE WAS
AUTONOMOUS AND THE GOVERNMENT IN LONDON TENDED TO IGNORE
WHAT WENT ON THERE.

3. ONCE THE TURMOIL OF THE LAST NINE YEARS STARTED, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOCUSED ITS ATTENTION ON NORTHERN IRELAND AND TOOK CORRECTIVE MEASURES. AS A RESULT, THESE FAMILIAR FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION HAVE NOW EITHER DISAPPEARED OR ARE DIMINISHING AS RAPIDLY AS ONE COULD REALISTICALLY EXPECT. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS FORBIDDEN BY LAW DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT AND IN HOUSING. POLITICAL GERRYMANDERING IN DERRY NO LONGER EXISTS. THE GOVERNMENT HAS OPENED THE UPPER REACHES OF THE CIVIL SERVICE TO CATHOLICS ALTHOUGH NO CATHOLIC AS YET HAS ATTAINED THE TOPMOST JOB IN ANY DEPARTMENT. THERE HAS ALSO BEEN AN EFFORT TO RECRUIT CATHOLICS FOR THE POLICE FORCE, BUT PROGRESS HERE IS NATURALLY SLOW BECAUSE IT IS HARD TO OVERCOME DECADES OF DISTRUST OF THE POLICE ON THE PART OF THE MINORITY COMMUNITY.

4. PRO-IRA PROPAGANDISTS ALSO ARGUE THAT HUMAN RIGHTS ARE BEING VIOLATED BY THE BRITISH IN THEIR PRISONS IN IRELAND AND THE REST OF THE UK. THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS ACKNOWLEDGED IN THE EUROPEAN COURT IN STRASBOURG EARLIER THIS YEAR IN A CASE BROUGHT BEFORE IT BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT THAT THERE WERE SOME INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND SEVERAL YEARS AGO. FOUR POINTS CAN BE MADE IN THIS CONNECTION: FIRST, THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS CEASED THE INTERNMENT OF SUSPECTED IRA ACTIVISTS ON SUSPICION ALONE. SECONDLY, AS A RESULT OF THE STRASBOURG PROCEEDINGS THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAS UNEQUIVOCALLY SAID THAT NO SUCH INTERROGATION TACTICS WILL EVER BE USED
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AGAIN. THIRDLY, THERE EXISTS THE EUROPEAN COVENANT ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND AN IMPARTIAL COURT TO ENFORCE IT. THIS IS THE TRIBUNAL WHICH IS NOW HEARING THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S CASE. FINALLY, PRESIDENT CARTER AND THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT NATURALLY CONDEMN THE DEPRIVATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHEREVER THEY TAKE PLACE.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 DUBLIN 1977

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5. THE CENTRAL HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE IN NORTHERN IRELAND TODAY IS THE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT OF ORDINARY MEN AND WOMEN TO LEAD THEIR LIVES FREE FROM RANDOM VIOLENCE. HOUSEWIVES CANNOT SAFELY SHOP IN DOWNTOWN BELFAST BECAUSE THERE IS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY OF A BOMB EXPLOSION. MEN CANNOT SAFELY PATRONIZE THEIR FAVORITE PUBS BECAUSE THERE IS ALWAYS THE RISK THAT A PUBL WILL BE FIRE-BOMBED. SMALL CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS ARE REPEATEDLY EXPOSED TO SCENES OF VIOLENCE AND ARE GROWING UP IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF UNREMITTING TENSION WHICH CAN ONLY BE DAMAGING TO THEIR PSYCHOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT. THIS FUNDAMENTAL HUMAN RIGHT TO PURSUE ONE'S DAILY LIFE FREE FROM VIOLENCE IS THE RIGHT THAT PRESIDENT CARTER SEEKS TO ADVANCE. THIS IS WHY HIS STATEMENT DEPLORES ANY AMERICAN AID TO MEN OF VIOLENCE AND URGES A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

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